

NYU SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM/D-PRIZE GLOBAL SOCIAL VENTURE COMPETITION CONSORTIUM



2017-2018 Academic Year

Improve Accountability of Public Officials and Services

Online reporting platforms encourage accountability through public monitoring, and incentivize local government officials to reduce corruption. In three months, engage at least 10,000 citizens with both monitoring information and an effective call to action, and create a plan to scale nationally and engage at least 1 million citizens over two years. A successful model will be evidence-based, will include continuous monitoring and testing, and a commitment to change if evidence suggests your approach is not working.

The Problem: The provision of public services in less-developed countries is rife with problems such as corruption and staff absenteeism. On the 2015 Corruption Perceptions Index score, Sub-Saharan African countries average a score of 33, whereas the 10 least corrupt countries in the world averaged about 86.¹ Corruption at the local level is particularly problematic and directly harms the poor. For instance, almost one third of people in the Middle East & North Africa region (ranked 4th out of 6 on the index) paid a bribe in 2015 to access basic services like water and education.²

The Proven Solution: There is a clear link between citizen voice, transparency, and accountability.³ Over the past decades, several countries have used public monitoring (often facilitated by online reporting platforms)

¹ Corruption Perceptions Index 2015, Transparency International.
http://files.transparency.org/content/download/1955/12832/file/2015_CorruptionPerceptionsIndex_Report_EN.pdf

² http://www.transparency.org/news/feature/50_million_people_in_the_middle_east_and_north_africa_paid_bribes_last_year

³ The impact of strengthening citizen demand for anti-corruption reform. U4.
<http://www.u4.no/publications/the-impact-of-strengthening-citizen-demand-for-anti-corruption-reform/downloadasset/377/>

to successfully reduce corruption. Organizations like I Paid a Bribe offer an online platform where people can share stories of corrupt officials and public offices at the local level.⁴ A similar reporting service in Morocco, named Mamdawrinch or ‘we will not bribe’, and another in Zimbabwe, allow citizens to report bribes onto Facebook and Twitter via mobile phone. The project in Zimbabwe received 150 cases within the first 24 hours of the service launching.⁵

Data reporting is combined with a call to action. For instance, a program in India which monitored teacher attendance and incentivized good behavior cut teacher absenteeism in half and increased student graduation rates by 40 percent.⁶ The program required teachers to submit a daily time-stamped photo of themselves in their classroom before receiving pay.

Your Challenge: We will award up to \$15,000 to a social entrepreneur with a vision to improve transparency into public services or into the performance of publicly elected officials. Your platform should engage at least 10,000 active users over a three-month pilot, with a plan to target at least 1 million users and scale nationwide in two years. A winning idea will include both data collection for monitoring and an effective way to drive action.

You must have a localized plan that can manage uncertainty, including:

- An evidence-based model which identifies the strongest factors limiting transparency, specific to the region in which you will operate
- An evidenced-based model of how and why your intervention will boost transparency in the long run, including identified metrics to measure success
- A plan for continuous testing and evaluation of the program
- A commitment to change the plan if the evidence suggests that the approach isn’t working

Market Information:

- A winning idea will have a clear vision for how data will drive improvement. Collecting data is not enough – it must be made actionable as well.
- D-Prize is particularly interested in corruption related to the provision of quality of elected officials (i.e., a report card that rates public officials). We are also interested in reporting on key services, such as police services (e.g. police corruption report card), justice services (e.g. corrupt judge report card), education (e.g. reporting of teacher attendance), and health (e.g. reporting of doctor and nurse job attendance).
- Local support and buy-in from some levels of the government are often necessary. Initiatives in Ghana, Liberia, Mozambique, and Sierra Leone have shown that local community participation is necessary to turn data into actual impact.⁷
- Past D-Prize winners include [Social Cops](#) (India), [Rimay](#) (Ecuador), [Sauiti](#) (East Africa), Please Disturb the Driver! (Mexico), Pardafas! (Nepal), and [Citizen Help Desk](#) (Nepal),

⁴ I Paid a Bribe. <http://www.ipaidabribe.com/>

⁵ Fighting Bribery Online, Transparency International 2012 Annual Report. https://www.transparency.org/files/content/publication/Annual_Report_2012.pdf

⁶ <http://www.povertyactionlab.org/publication/solving-absenteeism-raising-test-scores>

⁷ Poverty and Corruption in Africa, Community Voices Break the Cycle. Transparency International. 2012. http://www.transparency.org/files/content/activity/2012_PCA_brochure_EN.pdf

Ready To Apply?

Download a Round 1 Application Packet available at <http://bit.ly/dprizeinfo>

Questions? Email socialentrepreneurship@nyu.edu